

ORIGIN/ACTION

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AIRGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

DATE: MAY 18 1966

FROM : Embassy GUATEMALA

SUBJECT: Monthly Guerrilla Report - April

REF : A-449

REVIEWED BY *Cry* DATE OCT 1967
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

1. The extreme left continued to remain relatively quiet during the month of April, giving the appearance of indecisiveness concerning the course of action to be followed subsequent to the victory of the Partido Revolucionario (PR) at the polls March 6 (see refairgram). In these doldrums, the extreme left accomplished little in any field: the controversy between the Communist Party, the FAR (Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes) and the Movimiento Revolucionario 13 de Noviembre (MR-13) over Trotskyism in the latter organization continued with no apparent solution and with neither side giving any indication of willingness to retreat or accept the other as leader of the extremist movement.

The Partido Guatemalteco de Trabajo (PGT--Guatemalan Communist Party) still has not been able to establish complete control over its extremist elements, as the FAR independently continued to indicate that it was determined to maintain the armed struggle for a long period of time despite the fact that the PGT may have a more moderate attitude towards the PR. Efforts to obtain the release of political prisoners held by the GOG also led nowhere as the Government maintained a steadfast silence on the plight of any political prisoners it held (interestingly, even on this point, the FAR-MR-13 feud was evident, as all FAR appeals neglected to mention MR-13 members who also were captured).

2. As a result, suspense was generated as political observers wondered what the extreme left actually did intend to do, particularly in the short-run. About the only indication that the FAR did indeed intend to continue with terrorism came from several attacks on trucks which occurred along the Atlantic highway (on April 11, 15, 19, and 20-- see Embtel 802). At first, it was thought that the attacks may have

Enclosure: ~~attached~~

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been perpetrated by rightists anxious to disrupt the orderly return to Constitutional Government, and in fact that may still have been the case as far as one or two of the attacks are concerned. However, there is stronger evidence that the FAR was also involved, and in one case, the trucks were painted with the FAR initials. In each instance, the truckers were given lectures on why the FAR was fighting, property was damaged (the trucking companies claimed losses amounted to around \$50,000), and traffic was held up for up to several hours. In no instance did the army arrive in time to engage the guerrillas or otherwise hamper their operations (Embtel 802), and in fact, the GOG was somewhat criticized for reacting with too much indifference towards these assaults. It then promised to increase its patrols and no further terrorist action was noted along the Atlantic highway.

3. The only other significant act of terrorism during the month occurred on April 27 when several bombs were set off in various locations around Guatemala City (including one on the lawn of Union Church). However, these acts were subsequently identified as the work of the rightist Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN). Presumably, it was disgruntled over its defeat at the polls on March 6 and was anxious to cause as much commotion as possible as the moment approached for the victorious PR to assume control of the new National Congress (Embtel 824).

b. COMMENT: While the lull in activities during April probably reflected indecision on the part of the extremists, few observers thought it meant anything like a long-term suspension of terrorism or other extremist acts. It is becoming increasingly obvious that the PR is going to have to face the problem of the terrorists as much as did the Peralta Government. ~~XX~~
~~XX~~ For further reference, and a detailed summary of all terrorist events for the first quarter of 1966, see the Army Attaché's report IR 2838006566.

MELN

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